

BROOKLYN SENIOR CENTER
2021 ANNUAL REPORT



January 21, 2022

Mayor Katherine Gallagher
Members of Brooklyn City Council
Brooklyn, Ohio 44144

Dear Mayor Gallagher and Brooklyn City Council Members:

The following is the 2021 annual report for the Brooklyn Senior Center.

This report contains information regarding the staff, senior advisory council, volunteers and members. Due to the unprecedented year of 2021 with the Covid-19 global pandemic, the actual figures for the in-person activities are only from the middle of June through December 2021. We officially opened our building June 14, 2021 after over 15 months of being closed. Virtual and outreach programs did take place from January 2021 to June 14th. Our phone lines, transportation services, snow removal, and homebound meals were running all of 2021. In addition, we added more well check calls and visits, grocery shopping for shut-ins, and automated calls to announce drive up activities and important information. We also provided groceries for some of our more food insecure seniors.

The last two years have been such challenging years for the senior center and our senior members. We continued with our services the best we could and of course our first priority was to serve the senior community by providing information and services to assist them during this time of Covid-19.

Phone lines have remained open Monday through Friday - 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To many this filled a big void just by knowing they could call us if they had a question or a need. Many seniors expressed how thankful they were to be able to come back to a little bit of normal by coming to the outdoor activities and drive up activities. They were especially happy once we opened in June. Our kick off hot dog barbecue and bingo in the Grand Pavilion in May was very well attended. As we prepared for the opening of our center we were working on a cohesive plan that would ensure the utmost safety for our seniors. We opened slowly and carefully with outdoor concerts and outdoor activities once the weather warmed up enough. We strived to provide the senior services our residents have come to expect and enjoy but in a slightly different way. We offered some new activities that enabled all to maintain social distancing to comply with regulations.

The great majority of our senior opted to be vaccinated and many received the booster shot before the end of the year. There is no doubt that some seniors decided to stay home and we understood that. We are seeing that gradually they are coming back and we hope this forward progress continues into the New Year.

Finally, I do want to thank all the volunteers and my staff for their hard work and dedication in these trying times. I know I speak for all the city administration in saying that we hope 2022 will be a better year.

Sincerely,

Karen Fratto
Senior Coordinator

STAFF

1 Coordinator

1 Assistant Coordinator (Local Union 1099)

1 Van Driver / Laborer (Local Union 860)

1 Independent Contractor Ceramics Instructor - (up to Twenty-Four hours per week)

1 Independent Contractor Part-time cook - (up to Twenty-Four hours per week) on hold due to Covid

ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board of seven adults, over 55, appointed at large representing various senior citizen groups in the community. The Senior Center Advisory Board normally meets on a monthly basis but we discontinued those meetings for the time being.

VOLUNTEER AREAS

- Aerobics
- Chair Yoga
- Chair Volleyball
- Bingo
- Blood Pressure Program
- Men and Women Bocce Ball Committees
- Ceramics
- Corn Hole
- Crafts for Corner Store
- Health and Hearing Screenings
- Income Tax Scheduling
- Indoor Garage Sale (suspended in 2020/2021)
- Library
- Meal Delivery
- Quilting
- Reception Desk
- Special Event
- Sports - Tournaments
- Senior Advisory Board
- Weekly Meals Crew (Thursday, Luncheon & Tuesday, Soup & Sandwich) on hold 2021

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS: 35

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS through Dec 2021: 399 hours

SERVICES AVAILABLE AT THE SENIOR CENTER* Note: All indoor services were cancelled on 03/11/2020 and reopened on June14, 2021 due to covid-19

- Absentee Voter Applications
- AARP Safe Driver Course
- AARP no cost Tax Service - suspended 3-11-2020
- Blood Pressure Screenings
- Computers Available
- Coupon Exchange
- Current Books and Magazines on Health, Travel, Hobbies and Fiction
- Food Distribution for those in need
- Energy Assistance Applications
- Flu and Pneumonia Shots
- Grocery Shopping for Seniors
- Golden Buckeye Applications
- Hearing Screening
- Homestead Exemption and H.E.A.P. forms
- Information on Home Health Care, Assisted Living, Nursing Rehab Facilities
- Information on Senior Transportation
- Large-type Reading Material in our Library
- Meals for the Homebound Program
- Medicare and secondary insurance informational brochures
- Post Office on Wheels once a month
- Power of Attorney and Living Will Forms
- Referrals for In Home Health Care
- Referrals for In Home Alert Systems such as Life Alert
- Resume Help
- Shredding
- Snow Removal
- Social Security and Medicare Handbooks
- Social Work Information and Referral Service
- Speakers on Health and Other Current Self-Help Topics
- Transportation - Senior Center Bus and Car for Medical or Vital Shopping needs for shut ins
- Trips for recreational purposes
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Well Check phone calls
- Wheelchairs, Walkers, and Canes are available for loaning
- Xerox Copies (.10¢ per copy)

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE CENTER

***Note: All indoor activities were opened on 6/14/21 – unless noted as “on hold”**

- Afternoon Films
- Art Classes
- Bingo for prizes
- Bocce Ball (Men and Women’s Leagues)
- Book Review “on hold”
- Card Games
- Ceramics
- Chair Aerobics and Low Impact Aerobics
- Chair Yoga
- Chair Volleyball
- Corn Hole Coed Teams
- Corner Store Crafts
- Dances indoors “on hold”
- Drive Up events
- Dominoes
- Exercise
- Flower Arranging
- Indoor Garage Sales – Canceled for Sept 2021
- Ping Pong
- Pool Playing
- Post Office-on-Wheels
- Hands on Demonstrations – food or crafts
- Quilting
- Special Events / Concerts / Picnics “on hold indoors”
- Senior Olympics “on hold”
- Speakers on Various Topics – “on hold”
- Shuffle Board
- Television available to watch
- Trips – Local Day Excursions “on hold”
- Virtual Bingo
- Virtual Activities
- Walking Program
- Weekly Luncheon Meal on Tuesday and Thursday – “on hold”
- Wii Bowling and other sports games

HOMEBOUND MEAL PROGRAM

The 2021 Homebound Meals Program is an ongoing weekday program. This meal delivery program is offered to qualifying Brooklyn homebound residents. We were happy to keep it going in 2020 despite the pandemic. We made some minor adjustments to the way the volunteers and staff delivered and interacted with the homebound seniors. We no longer entered the home or had close contact with the recipients. Delivery was to their door and always at a six feet distance. All assessments were done over the phone and the picking up of meals at Senior Citizen Resources was done while adhering to strict social distancing and sanitary regulations. All meals were processed and packed in individually wrapped containers.

Meals are intended for persons over 60, not able to leave their home due to chronic illness, inability to drive, or inability to prepare meals safely for themselves. It is not intended to be a substitute for family care; therefore, it is for persons who have NO family living in the home or locally. There is sometimes a waiting list and all applicants are screened to see if they meet the qualifications. This meal is prepared by the kitchen of the Senior Citizen Resource Center, located at 3100 Devonshire Rd, Cleveland, Ohio. It is a government subsidized program and also funded in part by proceeds in the form of donations by the receiving residents. The recipient of the meals, or his/her family, decides on a donation amount. The suggested donation is \$1.00 per day and it is optional. The donation goes directly to Senior Citizen Resources in an envelope they provide the recipients once a week.

The meal consists of a hot dinner, a fresh piece of fruit, a milk and piece of bread or a roll. Some days it can be a cold sandwich type meal, but mostly it is a hot meal. It is delivered Monday through Friday, between 10 a.m. and noon.

Kathy Messeri oversees the Homebound Meal Program for the City of Brooklyn and works along with Senior Citizens Resources to ensure things run smoothly. There are five volunteers that deliver the meals five days of the week, each taking a day with an alternate as back-up and Kathy Messeri as an additional back-up driver. We are always looking to recruit volunteers that have a heart to deliver the meals to our residents in need. It is a very rewarding program. All volunteers are run through a back-round check.

A big thank you to all of our dedicated volunteers who deliver the meals and take pride in helping our homebound seniors.

TOTAL Homebound Meals Delivered in 2021: 2178 meals

SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

Snow removal sign-up were held for any existing or new applicants in the month of September and late sign ups were done well into December. The cost for existing or new applicants for the program is:

\$40.00 per person/household.

Late fee was \$15

An income guideline instituted for all “new” applicants remained the same Ordinance #2000-52

Guidelines are as follows:

\$36,300 maximum income for one person in the household;

\$41,500 maximum income for two person households;

\$46,650 maximum income for three person households.

If a resident is unable to come into the Senior Center because of illness, provisions are made for a “house-call” Anyone signing up after the initial registration time will be subject to a late fee of \$15.00, unless previous arrangements were made.

CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING CITY SNOW REMOVAL SERVICE

- Resident and all other occupants of your household must be 65 years of age or older;
- Residents meet income guidelines per Ordinance #2009-60 (listed above)
- Resident must own the single-family home they live in
- Current property Tax Bill must be presented
- The driveway must be solid, no grass strip or gravel down the center of the driveway;
- Resident must agree to release the City, its servants, agents, and employees from any liability arising out of the removal of snow from their driveway.

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS THAT RECEIVED THIS SERVICE in winter of 2021/2022 = 270

PRIVATE SNOW AND GRASS SERVICE

The Senior Center can provide the names of people who plow snow and cut grass. We supply the names of contractors but all fees are charged by contractors and **must** be pre-arranged between contractor and the resident.

NEWSLETTER

After the pandemic hit we focused on the quarterly Brooklyn City Newsletter and our automated phone calls through My Senior Center to be our main source of getting out information to our senior residents. We also had copies of the activities available for all at our check in desk.

INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

Income tax assistance is provided by AARP and offered to all seniors regardless of income.

AARP. No service for 2021 due to Covid-19. Good news is that it will resume for 2022

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS We resumed these on a limited basis with our paramedics only in June

- The Brooklyn Paramedics do BP screen the third and fourth Thursday of the month.
- Brooklyn Pointe suspended blood pressure checks
- UH Parma Hospital suspended blood pressure checks

Meals on Tuesday and Thurs. Suspended for 2021

Indoor Dances Suspended for 2021

Speakers Suspended for 2021

Trips Suspended for 2021

Health Screenings Suspended for 2021

ATTENDANCE 2021

We ask participants to sign in when they enter the building at our My Senior Center kiosk now located at our back entrance. This program helps us to track number of people coming in and the usage of the various programs.

Upon opening the building we moved the check in system to our back entrance and added covid-19 screening questions and made sure all answered with no symptoms before coming in.

Membership is free for all Brooklyn Residents 55 +.

Since our building was closed for over a year, the \$12 a year fee for Non-Resident renewal membership was waived for one year.

Residents & Non-Resident Members visits to the Senior Center 6/14/2021 to 12/31/2021 = 2,483

TRANSPORTATION WITH THE SENIOR VAN – A new way of doing it 2021

Door-to- door transportation is provided to Brooklyn residents who are 55 years of age or older who do not drive. Also included are handicapped or disabled persons, regardless of age. Due to the Pandemic we had to limit the number of riders that could be socially distanced by 6 feet. We had a maximum of only 4 to 5 riders per trip and special precautions were taken such as requiring that all wear a mask and screening of riders to ensure no one was exhibiting any Covid symptoms. We also invested in the Victory Sani Sprayer to use on our van and in our building. This high- powered spray gun uses a disinfectant that kills Covid 19 in the air and on surfaces.

We limited our shopping trips to once a week per rider. We kept our medical appointments the same. The van is in service Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Service is provided for medical appointments, shopping, personal errands and when there is a return to activities at the Senior Center or Recreation Center. Most do pay the *Suggested donation* of \$1.00 but if they are unable to pay we do not request it. Our numbers once again reflect the downturn due to Covid-19

PASSENGER CLASSIFICATIONS:

Elderly – Ambulatory	1070
Elderly – Non-ambulatory	13
Other	
TOTAL	1,083

TRIP PURPOSES:

Medical (3 days a week)	179
Shopping (3 days a week)	370
Senior Center	1
Home	520
Other	13
TOTAL	1,083

2021 Totals

PASSENGER TRIPS: 1,083

Transportation DONATIONS: \$1,015

REINVENTING OUR SERVICES DURING THE PANDEMIC of 2020/2021

With our building closed and seniors unable to gather together socially we tried to come up with some virtual activities and drive up activities that would keep them somewhat engaged. Most of our older seniors do not have computers or smart phones so that presented our biggest challenge. The automated phone call messages were the best way to reach all resident members in our database. These calls kept them informed with pertinent information on the status of covid-19 and such things as scams to be watchful of and upcoming drive up or virtual activities that they could participate in.

Drive Up and Virtual Activities 2021

Here are the drive-up and virtual activities we did when our building is closed in 2021

- January Cold Weather Survival Bag: Thursday Jan. 14th
- Virtual Bingo: Tuesday, Jan. 19th
- Drive-up Valentine Goodie Bag: Thursday Feb 11th
- Virtual Bingo: Tuesday, Feb 16th Time: 2pm to 3pm.
- St Pat's Day Drive-up Goodie Bag: Wednesday, March 17th
- Virtual Bingo March 23rd
- Virtual Bingo April 13th
- Wed. May 19th "Spring Get Together at a Distance" in the Grand Pavilion (free hotdogs)
- Wed. June 16th Welcome Back Outdoor concert of Polka Music and American Favorites with "The Wayne Tomsic Trio" in the Grande Pavilion.
- Wed. July 14th Drive up Ice Cream Social
- Virtual Book Club was done in conjunction with the library

Well Check Calls

We strived to do a number of well check calls every week to make sure our seniors, especially those living alone were doing ok. Many of them were quite down due to having to stay home and not seeing their friends or family. The cold months were the toughest and seemed to drag on. Summer months were better as many came up to the park and meet friends to walk or just to talk. The routine of coming to our center to socialize was a big void for them. We tried to talk with them and cheer them up by sending cards, making phone calls and encouraging them to participate in our drive-up activities or virtual bingo. If they needed additional help we tried our best to supply it to them or point them to those resources that could help. These well check calls also let us know of any other needs out there.

We recruited senior volunteers from the various programs to call their members and check in on them as well. Just a call from a friend can make a world of difference.

Shopping for Seniors

We shopped for any senior in need of essential prescriptions or groceries. We had volunteers who gave of their time without cost to shop for seniors that were fearful to go out. Extra shopping time was made available on our senior van for any that wanted to shop for themselves but did not drive.

Food Available for Seniors in need

We stocked our kitchen pantry with can goods, staple items, and some frozen items with permission from the city administration using city funds and some grant money. We provided it to any senior that might have need of groceries. We also received items from outside agencies.

PURPOSE OF THE BROOKLYN SENIOR CENTER

- Develop, cultivate and bring together the human resources of the community in assisting senior citizens, and handicapped residents.
- Encourage and work with public and private agencies in establishing facilities and programs in the city that deal with needs, such as social services, nutrition, transportation, exercise, and health awareness.
- Direct and bring together individuals willing to donate their time or services in helping others. This in turn helps them as they feel needed by others and take pride in their service.
- Develop and coordinate social, educational, virtual and wellness programs and service opportunities for senior citizens, which will improve their quality of life.

A LIFELINE FOR OUR SENIOR RESIDENTS

Senior centers are linked to their communities for all the support and services they provide. They are, in large part, reliant on the support of city government, contributors, volunteers, community leaders and others for their continued success.

Senior centers offer a place to go for social activities, trips, volunteer opportunities, health screenings, health and consumer education, creative arts, exercise, wholesome meals, phone support and more.

Senior centers offer services that help their members maintain independence, while also providing opportunities for them to interact with each other and contribute to their communities. Senior centers provide meaningful and valuable activities. Senior centers are helpful in bringing key information to the residents to help them make informed decisions on the many challenges they face as they age and offering help for them to age in place.

THE SENIOR CENTER PHILOSOPHY

- Promote self-worth
- Promote positive image of 55+ adults to the community
- Promote continued learning and mental growth / Promote better health
- Provide needed social interaction
- Provide help for them to remain in their homes
- Provide socialization through virtual programing and drive up activities during covid-19
- Encourage volunteerism and service
- Foster community involvement
- Involve isolated elderly, those who are now facing new challenges in aging and are lonely
- Improve the quality of life by exposure & involvement in creative and cultural arts
- Provide information on services available to seniors and the disabled in light of covid-19

	\$	
Ceramic / Craft Fees	1,052.50	
Exercise Class Fees		-
Corner Store & Greeting Cards	30.90	
Luncheon Sales		-
Coffee Donation	52.00	
Pizelles		-
Newsletter		-
Food Purchase	12.00	
Special Activities		-
Garage Sale, Room Rental		
SUBTOTAL	\$	1,147.40

Bus Transportation	1,015.00
Non-Resident Membership	408.00
Service Fees - Snow Removal	10,600.00
Late sign-up Fees - Snow Removal	595.00
Copy Fees	<u>1.90</u>
SUBTOTAL	\$ 12,618.00

10